

REMARKS

Claims 1-30 were all of the claims pending as of the Office Action dated January 16, 2003. Claims 1 and 16 are independent claims.

Claims 1 and 16 have been amended to further define the claimed invention. The amendments made to these claims are fully supported by the original Specification at least by the non-limiting embodiments shown in Fig. 5 and 6 and described at p. 7, line 15- p. 8, line 28.

Claims 2, 3, 17, and 18 are canceled. Therefore, claims 1, 4-16, and 19-30 are now all of the pending claims.

Objection

The Examiner has objected to the Abstract, alleging that it lacks grammatical clarity. In response, Applicants have amended the Abstract and respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the objection.

Claim Rejections 35 U.S.C. § 112 and §101

Claims 16-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, and under 35 U.S.C. § 101. The Examiner alleges that claim 16 is directed to more than one statutory class of invention. Claim 16 has been amended so that it is clear that the claim is directed to a device.

In addition, with respect to dependent claim 22, the Examiner alleges that the term "skirt" is confusing and suggests the use of the term --belt-- instead. Applicants have amended claim 22 accordingly.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of claim 16-30.

Claim Rejections 35 U.S.C. §102 and 103

Claims 1, 2, 4, 10, 16, 17, 19, 23, 24, and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by JP 02-241737 (JP ‘737’)¹. Claims 5-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over JP ‘737. Claims 3, 11, 13-15, 18, and 27-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over JP ‘737 (as applied to claims 1, 2, 4, 10, 16, 17, 19, 23, 24, and 26) in view of JP 06-079801 (“JP ‘801”). Claims 6, 8, and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over JP ‘737 (as applied to claims 1, 2, 4, 10, 16, 17, 19, 23, 24, and 26) and in further view of McIntyre (US 4,871,593). Claims 12, 20-22, and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over JP ‘737 (as applied to claims 1, 2, 4, 10, 16, 17, 19, 23, 24, and 26) and further in view of Fujii et al. (US 5,658,514). Claim 30 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over JP ‘737 in view of ‘801 (as applied to claims 3, 11, 13-15, 18, and 27-29) and further in view of Fujii.

Claims 2, 3, 17, and 18 are canceled, rendering the rejections of these claims moot.

Claim 1

With respect to amended independent claim 1, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of at least because JP ‘737 does not teach or suggest all of the claim recitations. For example, JP ‘737 does not teach or suggest the claimed method of

¹ Applicants note that English language translations of at least one of the applied non-English language references are not of record at this time. As discussed in MPEP §706.02, although in limited circumstances, it may be appropriate to rely on the abstract of a non-English document in a non-final Office Action, if an Examiner intends to further rely upon a non-English document, a translation must be obtained so that the record is clear.

continuously coating a metal strip in which the “said metal strip is heated before, during and after application only through contact of the internal face with said heated support roller.”

Instead, JP ‘737 merely teaches a method of manufacturing a laminate metal plate in which the metal plate 3 is preheated by a preheating unit before coming into contact with roll 1 (support roller).

In addition, there is no teaching in JP ‘737 that the roll 1 has a “non-deformable” surface. In order to obtain adherent and amorphous or weakly crystalline coating by preheating the metal plate using a heated roller, the roller must have a non-deformable surface. Although JP ‘737 teaches that the roll 1 can be made of metal (or also rubber), there is no discussion that the roll 1 has a non-deformable surface.

As such, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of claim 1.

Claim 16.

Applicants also respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of independent claim 16 at least because JP ‘737 does not teach or suggest the claimed device for coating a metal strip with a “support roller [having] a non-deformable metal surface, “whereby said metal strip is heated before, during and after application only through contact of the internal face with said heated support roller,” as is discussed above with respect to claim 1.

Claims 4, 5, 10, 16, 19, 23, 24, and 26

Furthermore, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of claims 4, 5, 10, 16, 19, 23, 24, and 26 at least because of their dependency from one of claims 1 and 16.

Claims 11, 13-15, and 27-29

Applicants also respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of claims 11, 13-15, and 27-29 at least because of their dependency from one of claims 1 and 16, and because JP '801 (which was applied in an attempt to show post heating of the metal strip, cooling by quenching, internal face coating, and non-stick layer on the support roll) does not cure the deficiencies in JP '737 discussed above.

Claims 6-9

In addition, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of claim 6-9 at least because of their dependency from claim 1, and because McIntyre (which was applied in an attempt to show applying a coating in a molten state, applying a coating to an applicator roller with a deformable surface and then transferring the strip, and that the polymer is thermosetting and post treatment cured) does not cure the deficiencies in JP '737 discussed above.

Claims 12, 20-22, and 25

Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of claims at least because of their dependency from one of claims 1 and 16, and because Fujii (which was applied

in an attempt to show cooling rolls on both sides of the strip) does not cure the deficiencies in JP '737 discussed above.

Claim 30

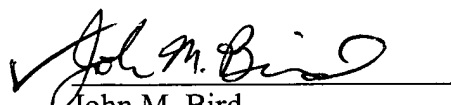
Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of claims at least because of their dependency from one of claim 16, and because neither JP '801 nor Fujji cure the deficiencies in JP '737 discussed above.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,


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